

view, we may say that it was well that Henry had been a Protestant, well that he became a Catholic.

His tolerant policy embraced even the Jesuits, to whom the Parliament and the Sorbonne were as hostile as to the Huguenots. The Parliament attributed to their machinations, though without proof, Chatel's attempt on the king's life, and, in condemning the would-be assassin, condemned the order "as corrupters of youth, perturbers of the public peace, and enemies of the king and the State," and banished it the realm. It sent Pere Guignard, the author of a manuscript work in which the king was bitterly reviled, to the gallows. Henry at this period shared their aversion, for the Jesuits had been the most implacable of his opponents, the abettors of Philip II., the sworn henchmen of the pope. For several years he steadfastly turned a deaf ear to the overtures for their rehabilitation. "As to the Jesuits," wrote he to the Duke of Luxemburg, "I replied to the legate ingenuously that if I had two lives I would willingly give one of them for the satisfaction of his Holiness in this matter, but, as I had only one, I owed it to my subjects to preserve it, for these zealots have shown themselves so fanatic and enterprising, while they remained in the kingdom, that they are intolerable. They never cease to seduce my subjects, to spin their intrigues, not so much for the purpose of conquering and converting the heretics as to establish their power within my realm, and to enrich themselves at the expense of everybody. I can truly say that my affairs have only prospered, and my person has only been in safety, since their banishment. It is impossible that they can be tolerated in France by those who love my life and quiet.³¹ This was a severe judgment, yet Henry lived to recall and even become the zealous patron of the Jesuits. He owed this singular rebound in favour of toleration and patronage to the influence of the astute Pere Cotton. The edict of the 11th September 1603 annulled that of January 1595, on the express condition that the order should refrain from all intrigues against the king, and the peace of the kingdom, "without reservation or exception whatsoever." Even with this precaution, the Parliament strenuously opposed their read mission, and on the 24th December the First President, De Harlay, voicing its remonstrances, denounced the order as